Utah State Charter School Board Meeting
Minutes
November 16, 2006
North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education
10:00 a.m.

APPROVED

Members present: Julie Adamic, Brian Allen, John Pingree, Scott Smith

Members excused: Eric Smith, Barbara Killpack

Staff present: John Broberg, Marlies Burns, Gary Belliston, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Ray Timothy, Mark Cluff, John Pitcher, Janene Bowen

Work Session

Chair Scott Smith commented on the report of the responsibilities of the State Charter School Board. One of the responsibilities is to set a timeline for new Charter School openings. He felt the timeline of 10 months to open is not "healthy". Chair Smith suggested the State Charter School Board produce an effective timeline for the opening of Charter Schools. ThE timeline would include: when to review applications; when the applications would be recommended to State Board of Education; deadline for ground breaking of the school; actual date school will open for operation. The State Board of Education has requested the State Charter School Board to develop a plan of action.

Member Brian Allen stated he feels one of the major problems the schools face is having a facility completed on time. He also stated he felt the Charter School Board made a stand in the rule that had been put in place, if the school did not have a building site selected and secured by January 1st, they were deferred for a year. He stated nine months is a reasonable time frame and gives them enough time to get it completed once a site is selected.

Chair Scott Smith informed the State Charter School Board some of the criticism or a concern in the audit is that the State Charter School Staff is spending a lot of time with the applicants. The staff meets with them, the staff informs the applicants where they are deficient in their application and the applicants are coming back to the staff with changes.

Member Brian Allen stated that in the authorizing statute it states one of the responsibilities of the State Charter School Board is to promote the creation of charter schools and the State Charter School Staff was responding to that language. If that is not what they want the staff to do, they need to change the statute. Mr. Allen also stated it seems odd to criticize in an audit the State Charter School Staff for following the law. Member Brian Allen questioned which audit, the State's audit or the University of Utah's audit?

Deputy Superintendent Ray Timothy responded the information was from the Legislative Audit that has not been released. Mr. Timothy stated in the audit the State Charter School Board will be criticized for spending 100% of their time promoting charter schools and 0% of their time holding charter schools accountable. In discussions Mr. Timothy has attended, it has been stated that the State Charter School Board should have been regulating the amount of time the State Charter School Staff has been spending on accountability and spending less time working on the applications.

Mr. Allen expressed his taking offense to the statement of 0% of their time regulating the State Charter School Staff; he knows personally how much time board members have spent going out working with schools and how

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much time staff members have spent, and feels it is a completely false assessment. Also, Mr. Allen stated the State Charter School Board keeps getting mixed signals on what they can or can't do to direct the State Charter School Staff. The State Charter School Board has been informed they don't have a right to direct the State Charter School Staff and direction needs to go through Superintendent Harrington. What is the answer? Does the State Charter School Board have authority to direct the State Charter School Staff or not?

Deputy Superintendent Timothy answered saying those concerns would be discussed in the executive session of the State Charter School Board Meeting. Mr. Timothy also stated that he had not given this information to the audit committee, but it is their perception on what they are hearing and the information they have gathered.

After much discussion the following timeline for the 2008-2009 school year was suggested:

December 2006 – Mandatory new application training

February 1, 2007 – Final application submission

April 2007 – State Charter School Board reviews and determines recommended charter applicants to State Board of Education

May 2007 – State Board of Education reviews and determines approved charters for the 2008-2009 school year

June 2007 – Mandatory board training (all board members must attend)

January 2008 – Last date to break ground on building

August 2008 – School opens

Motion was made by Member John Pingree and seconded by Member Julie Adamic to approve the timeline as suggested as part of the requirement for charter school application. The motion was unanimous.

State Charter School Staff was directed to have the application timeline posted on the Charter School website.

Call to Order

Chair Scott Smith called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Scott Smith commented in the minutes from last month, it was stated that the State Charter School Board Bylaws would be addressed. Director John Broberg informed the State Charter School Board because the bylaws had been taken to the State Board of Education to review and because concerns were expressed, the State Charter School Board Bylaws would be addressed in the January Board Meeting.

Motion was made by Member Brian Allen and seconded by Member Julie Adamic to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2006 State Charter School Board Meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Charter School Board Chair's Report

Chair Scott Smith stated he attended a meeting with Superintendent Harrington and Deputy Superintendent Timothy and feels there is good process in place for communication with all parties concerned and he appreciates a good working relationship. Mr. Smith stated Kim Frank presented items that are being presented to the legislation.

Director John Broberg commented there are now 59 charter schools approved, some being district approvals, and it is very apparent that the function and process is going to change, because the charter school movement is getting large. Mr. Broberg also stated with the 14 new schools that opened this school year, it has put extra burden on the Charter School Staff, as well as the many different sections and divisions of the USOE. He stated there needs to be control, things need to be looked at differently, and yet there still has to be an effort to keep the vision of individualization.

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Executive Session

Motion was made by Member John Pingree and seconded by Member Brian Allen to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate and personnel. The motion was carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Member Julie Adamic and seconded by Member John Pingree to move out of Executive Session. The motion was carried unanimously.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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